

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
MINUTEMAN III PROPULSION SYSTEM ROCKET ENGINE
LIFE EXTENSION PROGRAM
HILL AIR FORCE BASE, UTAH**

**CLEARED
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Department of Defense**

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508) implementing NEPA, Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 5000.2, and United States Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7061 (promulgated by 32 CFR 989), which implements the requirements of NEPA, the U.S. Air Force has conducted an assessment of potential environmental consequences of activities associated with the Minuteman III (MM III) Propulsion System Rocket Engine (PSRE) Life Extension Program.

Proposed Action and Alternatives: The U.S. Air Force intends to extend the service life of MM III PSRE units to the year 2020 by refurbishing up to 586 PSRE units. The Proposed Action includes ground transportation of the PSRE units from three Air Force Base (AFB) operational wings (FE Warren AFB, Wyoming; Malmstrom AFB, Montana; and Minot AFB, North Dakota) to Hill AFB, Utah and the Freeport Center in Clearfield, Utah, where the primary refurbishment activities would occur. Refurbishment includes disassembly operations, installation of seven components in a modification kit, and final functional testing. The proposed action also includes refurbishment of the shipping and storage containers used to transport the PSRE. Shipping container refurbishment would occur at Hill AFB and would involve transport of the shipping containers from Building 2016 to Buildings 2014 and 847, where refurbishment would occur. As part of the proposed action, five units per year would be transported to and from the Survivability and Vulnerability Integration Center (SVIC) near Little Mountain, Utah for mass properties testing. An additional one unit per year would be transported to the SVIC for dynamic testing and then transported to the White Sands Testing Facility near Las Cruces, New Mexico for static firing.

Refurbishment would begin with two units in December 2004 and build to a rate of eight units per month by September 2005. Refurbishment of the 586 units would be completed in August 2011.

Under the No-Action Alternative, transport of the PSRE units and replacement of the five components and two electrically operated ordnance components would not occur. The EA identifies three alternative approaches for extending the life of the PSRE that were considered but excluded from analysis.

Testing activities occurring at the SVIC and at the WSTF are not addressed in this EA. Activities at the SVIC were reviewed and Categorically Excluded from further analysis based similarity of actions analyzed in the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Propellant Cutter and Shaker Facility, for which a Finding of No Significant Impact was signed. Activities occurring at WSTF were reviewed in accordance with procedures at

the White Sand Test Facility, and a Record of Environmental Consideration determined the PSRE test activities were adequately covered in an existing Environmental Resource Document and did not require further analysis.

Anticipated Environmental Impacts: The EA evaluated the environmental impacts expected to occur as a result of transporting the PSRE units between the operational wings and the sites where the refurbishment and testing activities would occur. Typical transit routes were considered. The EA also evaluated the environmental impacts of actions performed in the refurbishment of the PSRE units and refurbishment of the shipping containers. Environmental impacts were assessed related to the following resource areas: surface water; groundwater; geology and soils; vegetation; wildlife; air quality; archaeological, historical, and cultural resources; land use; noise; health and safety; hazardous materials and hazardous wastes; transportation; and socioeconomic conditions. The short-term, long-term, and cumulative effects of beneficial and detrimental impacts were considered.

Transport of PSRE units using commercial tractors along major highways and interstate roadways between the three operational wings and Hill Air Force Base would not have a significant impact on public road traffic, air quality, or noise. Similarly, transport of a total of six units per year (five for mass properties testing and one for dynamic testing) to the SVIC at Little Mountain, Utah and one unit per year to WSTF near Las Cruces, New Mexico for static firing would not have a significant impact on public road traffic, air quality, or noise.

All other activities related to the proposed action would be conducted within existing buildings specifically constructed for the type of activities in this proposed action. No ground-disturbing actions are required; therefore, no impacts are expected related to surface water, groundwater, geology and soils, vegetation, wildlife, archeological, historical, and cultural resources, or land use. The hazardous materials used during refurbishment are common items and would be used in small quantities. Consequently, there would not be any significant environmental impacts related to their use or disposal as hazardous waste.

The proposed action does not involve any unusual risks to the health and safety of government personnel or to the public. All the activities associated with the proposed action are well understood, and procedures are established to ensure risks are minimal.

The addition of up to nine personnel at the Freeport Center to support the PSRE refurbishment would have a small positive impact on the socioeconomic conditions in the area. It would not create any significant detrimental impacts.

Since the surrounding community is not impacted by the activities in this proposed action, minority and poor populations would not be disproportionately affected.

Public Comment Period: The Environmental Assessment and a draft FONSI were available for public comment from 22 May 2003 through 30 June 2003. Public notices were published in the *Desert News*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Hilltop (Hill AFB) Times*, and *Ogden Standard Examiner*. The EA was available on the websites of the newspapers and on the Hill AFB Environmental Management website. There were no comments on the Draft EA.

Conclusion: Based on the EA, which is herein incorporated by reference, it is concluded that the Proposed Action will not result in significant environmental impacts nor cause significant cumulative impacts to occur. An Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This FONSI, with the supporting EA, fulfills the requirements of NEPA, the CEQ regulations, and AFI 32-7061. Point of contact for this document is Mr. Richard Clark, ICBM Program Office, telephone (801) 775-2708. The final FONSI and the associated EA will be maintained in the ICBM Program Office program files, Hill Air Force Base, Utah 84056.



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DATE